



# Plane Talk



July 2002

167th Airlift Wing, WVANG

Next UTAs 9-10 August

## Unit Members Injured in Turbulence Incident

Photos by Staff Sgt. Emily Beightol,  
167th AW Multimedia Support Center.

About 20 members of the 167<sup>th</sup> Airlift Wing were injured July 12 on a routine flight home from Puerto Rico when they encountered severe turbulence over the Atlantic Ocean about 140 miles off the coast of Virginia.

Thirty-nine unit members returning after a four-month deployment were enjoying a normal flight when the incident occurred. The plane quickly lost a significant amount of altitude, causing passengers to experience negative G-forces as the plane dropped and positive G-forces as the plane



returned to its normal altitude. Because the plane dropped so quickly, the passengers were pushed upwards of 15 feet in the air, some hitting the plane's ceiling. As the plane regained altitude, the passengers fell to the floor.

The passengers quickly used their emergency training, as the crew focused on following standard procedures governing such emergencies. Passen-



gers and aircrew immediately treated the injured until the plane could land. Because of the injured the crew decided to land at Oceana Naval Station, Virginia Beach, about 45 minutes short of Martinsburg.

Another C-130H from the 167<sup>th</sup> AW flew to Oceana Naval Station July 13 and returned 34 of the passengers to Martinsburg that day. Also on the flight was an eight-person maintenance crew to inspect the aircraft for any damage. The C-130H involved in the event was determined to be safe to fly and returned to Martinsburg Tuesday.

Base medical personnel checked all passengers upon their arrival. Five unit members stayed behind at the Portsmouth Naval Facility to recover but returned to Martinsburg Tuesday. A fifth member was transported to Norfolk General

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**Starbase Held at 167th AW  
Family Support Group News  
Members Return from SWA**

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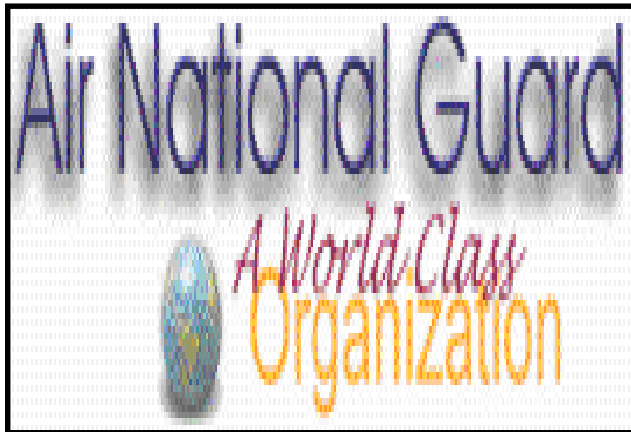
***Mountaineer Pride Worldwide***

## Turbulence *from Page 1.*

Hospital and is listed in stable condition with pelvic injuries.

The unit members were deployed to Puerto Rico to fly resupply missions and to transport personnel throughout Central and South America. They replaced troops who had deployed to Southwest Asia.

Originally, they were to return to Martinsburg and later deploy to Southwest Asia themselves. However, those plans are currently on hold.



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# CHAPLAIN NEWS

By Chaplain (Capt.) David Reynolds

## True or False

Without dispute, most would agree we are living in a highly stressful and emotionally charged time. During times of stress, people react quite differently than they normally would during calm times. Some explode in anger; some implode in sullenness and avoidance. As times of stress surround some individuals, **thoughts of suicide arise.** There are a lot of myths concerning suicidal behavior and thoughts. Please answer the following true-or-false questions about suicide:

1. Most suicides are caused by one sudden traumatic event.
2. Most suicides occur with little or no warning.
3. You shouldn't talk about suicide to someone who you think might be at risk.
4. People who talk about suicide won't do it.
5. A nonfatal outcome means it was only an attention-getting behavior.
6. Suicidal persons want to die.
7. Once a person attempts suicide, they won't do it again.
8. Most people who kill themselves are poor.
9. Suicide is purely an individual choice – it affects only them.
10. Suicide is complex.

How did you do? The fact is all of the above questions are false except the last one. Suicide is very complex, but that should not cause us to shy away from those who find themselves contemplating suicide. Your discerning ears could locate someone who desperately needs a caregiver. Make no mistake about it, the stressful, desperate times we are living in are a fertile field for suicide and suicidal thoughts to be grow in. We as caregivers can help. **The greatest assistance you** can give to someone thinking and talking about suicide is not long-term therapy, it is simply identifying their need and finding them professional help. Professional help can be found in chaplains, clergy, medical and mental health professionals. You are the catalyst. You can make the difference between life and death by listening, discerning and directing those in need.

One final true-or-false statement ... **I'm not equipped** to really help someone contemplating suicide. The answer to that question is false unless you simply don't care. Caring is the highest prerequisite to helping. Those who care are indeed what those who are struggling need. In these difficult times, you can make a difference! Your caring may be the difference between life and death.

## Safety Notes

### Risk Management Can Improve Safety

by 2nd Lt. Adrienne Traxinger, Air Force Print News

7/10/2003 - **SAN ANTONIO** — With the first half of the 101 Critical Days of Summer almost finished, 14 airmen were killed in private motor vehicle accidents. Eight of those killed were involved in motorcycle mishaps, including one during the Fourth of July weekend.

Air Force leaders are emphasizing operational risk management to keep airmen safe.

"There's risk involved in everything we do," said Chief Master Sgt. Clifford Tebbe, ground safety superintendent at the Air Force Safety Center at Kirtland Air Force Base, N.M. "The good news is risk is manageable."

Operational risk management is a tool to help people think through the risks associated with an activity, on or off duty. It involves determining the risks associated with an action or activity, weighing them against the benefits and controlling the risks, according to safety officials. A foundational principle of ORM is "accept no unnecessary risk."

"We usually get away with taking risks, so we become oblivious to its presence," Tebbe said. "On the extreme end of our risk tolerance continuum, we become flippant about it."

One area where people take risks every day is on the highway.

"If there's a place where we need to exercise risk management, it's on the road," Tebbe said.

Private motor vehicle accidents continue to be the major threat to airmen, according to safety officials. Since October, 33 airmen have died from preventable motor vehicle accidents.

People can start minimizing accidents by identifying hazards associated with an activity, evaluating the severity of possible adverse effects and identifying ways to reduce the hazard. Assessing the situation leads to making decisions based on the information at hand, implementing the risk controls and reviewing the effectiveness of the process, according to officials.

A fundamental part of risk management is being vigilant regarding fellow airmen's safety, according to officials. People are the Air Force's most valuable asset, and deaths do not just affect family and friends, but the whole mission.

"The losses we experience are far-reaching," Tebbe said. "We don't just lose a person, we lose a friend, a family member and their experience."

Risk management has been incorporated into the curriculum at airman leadership school and noncommissioned officers academies.

## 167th AW Promotions



**TO CAPTAIN**  
*Rodney D. Jenkins* **AES**



**TO FIRST LIEUTENANT**  
*John R. Poland* **CES**  
*Stacey R. Shade* **MXG**



**TO MASTER SERGEANT**  
*Matthew R. Bennett* **AS**  
*Charles E. Longley* **CES**  
*Robert W. Rider* **AS**



**TO TECHNICAL SERGEANT**  
*Michael D. Derito* **MXS**  
*Michael D. Hill* **CF**



**TO STAFF SERGEANT**  
*Matthew A. Byard* **CES**  
*Larry J. Clark* **AES**  
*Gretchen P. Close* **AW**  
*Justin D. Jenkins* **LRS**  
*Michael C. Klein* **MXS**  
*Emilio P. Mola* **AW**  
*Benjamin L. Money* **CES**  
*Eric B. Swartz* **AW**  
*Glenn S. Walters* **CES**



**TO SENIOR AIRMAN**  
*Daniel M. Clarke* **AES**  
*Amber J. Crawford* **LRS**  
*Aaron W. Gatrell* **APS**  
*Shawn M. Smith* **MXS**  
*Justin C. Walther* **APS**



**TO AIRMAN FIRST CLASS**  
*Ryan E. Day* **SF**  
*Joshua T. Feagley* **SF**  
*Rachel M. Feagley* **SF**  
*Edison D. Gomez* **SF**  
*Laura M. Moseley* **SF**  
*Joshua P. Pryor* **SF**  
*Kris D. Rata* **SF**  
*James C. Runk* **SF**  
*Anthony M. Scolaro* **SF**  
*Ronnie E. Shafer, Jr.* **SF**

### Worth Repeating

"Efforts and courage are not enough without purpose and direction."

*President John F. Kennedy*



## TRICARE Call Center Has New Hours

Effective July 1, 2003, the TRICARE Information Call Center (TIC) will have new hours of operation. The new hours are: Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., EDT (excluding federal holidays).

TRICARE Management Activity Toll-Free Numbers are:  
TRICARE Prime Remote (TPR): 1-888-DoD-CARE  
(1-888-363-2273)

Senior Pharmacy Program: 1-877-DoD-MEDS  
(1-877-363-6337)

TRICARE For Life: 1-888-DoD-LIFE (1-888-363-5433)

TRICARE Online: 1-866-DoD-EWEB (1-866-363-3932)

HIPAA 1-888-DoD-HIPA (1-888-363-4472)

For more information on TRICARE, see <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,30822,00.html>

## Important Veterans Health Care Legislation

Congressman Chris Smith (NJ), Chairman of the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs, joined by Health Subcommittee Rob Simmons (CT) and dozens of other Members of Congress, has introduced the Veterans Health Care Full Funding Act.

The bill follows up on the central recommendation of a Presidential task force which found an alarming mismatch between demand for services and available resources for VA health care. The Act would change the way veterans health care is funded by creating an independent panel of experts to establish annual funding levels. "Our approach is to take the politics out and put the experts in," said Smith. To ensure that veterans are receiving timely care, the legislation would require VA to meet its own access standards; and if VA is unable to furnish care to veterans who need it within reasonable timeframes, it would be obligated to contract for that care with non-VA providers. For full details, see [http://www.military.com/NewContent?file=VetHealth\\_062003](http://www.military.com/NewContent?file=VetHealth_062003).

## Congress Approves Money for Retirees

Some military retirees will soon be receiving monthly payments for service-related health problems thanks to a provision of the 2003 National Defense Authorization Act. Combat-related special compensation allows some disabled mili-

tary retirees to collect payments for both their military service and their service-related disability. According to the legislation, a veteran with "combat-related" disabilities is any 20-year military retiree with at least a 60 percent combined disability rating, with injuries as a "direct result of armed conflict," are a result of "hazardous" military service, were incurred while serving in "conditions simulating war" or were incurred "through an instrumentality of war." Automatic qualifiers include any military retiree with at least 20 years of service who is rated as at least 10 percent disabled by injuries related to the award of a Purple Heart, officials said. Payments are retroactive to June 1 for those whose disability occurred before that date. Those who apply and are approved will begin receiving payments about 60 days after approval. For more details, see [http://www.military.com/NewsContent?file=usaf2\\_062403](http://www.military.com/NewsContent?file=usaf2_062403)

## New Benefits for Veterans, Reservists and Surviving Widows

Comprehensive legislation to expand and extend benefits to veterans and their surviving spouses cleared the House Committee on Veterans' Affairs in a markup session last week. The Committee also approved legislation (H.R. 1720) to authorize \$1.1 billion in new VA health care construction projects, legislation (H.R. 1516) to open five new national cemeteries for veterans and their families, and five other bills (H.R. 116, H.R. 2357, H.R. 2433, H.R. 2595, H.Con.Res. 159) to assist and honor America's veterans.

H.R. 2297, the Veterans Benefits Act of 2003, was the most wide-ranging legislation passed, and intends to:

- Expand the Montgomery GI Bill program for self-employment training programs; make permanent the State Cemetery Grants Program

- Reinstate a VA pilot program to provide vocational training to newly eligible VA nonservice-connected pension recipients

- Increase the specially adapted automobile grant from \$9,000 to \$11,000

- Increase the specially adapted housing grant from \$48,000 to \$50,000 for the most severely disabled veterans and from \$9,350 to \$10,000 for other severely disabled veterans.

- Eliminate the requirement that a POW be held for 30 days or more to qualify for presumptions of service-connection for several specific disabilities

- Make the VA home loan program for members of the Selected Reserve permanent;

- Adjust the funding fee charged to Selected Reserve home loan applications to the same amount as that paid by active duty service members

- Reinstate the Department of Veterans Affairs' vendee loan program

For more on this bill and other benefits legislation, see <http://veterans.house.gov/news/108/6-26-03.html>

## STARBASE Kid's Camp 2003

STARBASE is hosting three kid's camps this summer for the children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews of guardsmen. The children are building and launching rockets and hot air balloons, learning Newton's laws of motion, properties and states of matter and Bernoulli's



principle. One of the favorite segments of the program is a day of ground school, where students apply previously learned concepts to the flight simulator. STARBASE is a Department of Defense-funded program aimed at exposing children to real-world applications of math, science and technology using aeronautics as its theme.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Emily Beightol

## Family Readiness News

- *Classes for Families*
- *Items for Sale to Support Troops*
- *Meeting Date Changed*



Patriotic stars, shown above, are available in the Family Program office, Building 110 next to the mailroom, for \$12. All fundraisers by the Family Readiness Group support activities for guard members and their families.

Classes on demobilization and reunion are being planned for the families of returning deployed members. All spouses are encouraged to attend. The dates and times of these classes are to be determined. Please call the Family Program office for details at 262-5590 or at 1-866-986-4325 if you live out of the local area.

The Family Readiness Group meeting scheduled for July 29 has been changed to Thursday, July 24, at 7 p.m. in the dining facility.

## Welcome to the 167th Airlift Wing

Amber L. Curtis	CES
Michelle D. Fournier	CF
Seth O. Green	AS
David J. Groom	AS
Rodney A. Hester, Jr.	MDG
Jacob A. Marquis	SFS
Douglas W. Miller	APS
James W. Porter	CES
Warren D. Stimpson	LRS
Joseph P.B. Windle	AS

## Retirements

### *Aerial Port Squadron*

*Master Sgt. John W. Rickabaugh June 10*

*Master Sgt. James W. Gregory, Jr. June 12*

### *Airlift Wing*

*Staff Sgt. Thomas E. Taylor June 10*

### *Maintenance Squadron*

*Master Sgt. James W. Gregory June 13*

### *Logistics Readiness Squadron*

*Master Sgt. John W. Say June 16*

*Master Sgt. Eugene S. Haymes June 21*

# Mountaineer Pride Worldwide

## What is monkeypox?

By Lt. Col. Sheila M. Kinty  
167<sup>th</sup> Public Health Officer

### *What is monkeypox?*

Monkeypox, a rare disease that occurs primarily in central and western Africa, is caused by a virus closely related to (but distinctly different from) smallpox. It is called monkeypox



because it was first found in 1958 in laboratory monkeys. The virus can also infect rats, mice, squirrels, and rabbits.

Monkeypox was first diagnosed in humans in 1970 in remote locations in Africa. Prior to June 2003, monkeypox had not been diagnosed outside of Africa.

### *Signs and symptoms of monkeypox in humans*

Signs and symptoms are similar to smallpox but milder. The incubation period averages 12 days (range 7 to 17 days) after exposure. The disease typically begins with fever, headache, muscle aches, backache, swollen lymph nodes, generalized discomfort and a feeling of tiredness. Within 1 to 3 days after the onset of fever, the patient develops a rash (raised bumps) often first on the face but sometimes starting on other parts of the body. These 'bumps' usually develop through several stages before crusting and falling off. The illness typically lasts for 2 to 4 weeks. In medically underserved areas of Africa fatality rates between 1 and 10 percent have been reported. (Prior to its eradication, fatality rates for smallpox were 30 percent.)

### *How do humans get infected with monkeypox?*

Humans get monkeypox from infected animals; either through a bite or direct contact with an infected animal's blood, body fluids, or lesions. Monkeypox can also be spread from person to person but it is much less easily transmitted that way. It can also be spread by direct contact with body fluids or an infected person or with contaminated objects, such as bedding or clothing.

### *How is monkeypox treated?*

Currently, there is no proven, safe treatment for monkeypox. Smallpox vaccine has been reported to reduce the risk of monkeypox. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is recommending the smallpox vaccine for individuals exposed to the disease.

### *Monkeypox in the United States*

As of 14 June, 81 persons with suspected monkeypox had been reported in Wisconsin, Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio. In addition, prairie dogs infected with monkeypox may have been sold to buyers in 15 states, including Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Texas, South Carolina, Florida, Tennessee, Pennsylvania, Mississippi, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey and New York.

### *How did monkeypox get introduced into the United States?*

It is still uncertain exactly how monkeypox was intro-

duced into the United States. One theory is that infected Gambian rats and other small mammals were shipped to the United States from Ghana. The Gambian rats were housed with prairie dogs at a distributor of exotic pets in Illinois. The prairie dogs were then sold as exotic pets in several states. It appears that most people in the United States who are ill with monkeypox got sick after close contact with infected prairie dogs that had been purchased as pets.

### *Monkeypox in this area?*

To date there have been no suspected cases in humans or animals reported in this area.

### *What should you do if you think you've been exposed to monkeypox?*

Persons who think that they may have been exposed to a person or an animal (e.g., pet prairie dog) with monkeypox should contact their health care provider and their state or local health department.

## **LADIES ONLY!** **Fetal Protection Program** **Reminder**

Female workers (regardless of work location) are reminded to notify the Public Health Office immediately when they learn that they are pregnant. The goal of the Fetal Protection Program is to protect the unborn child. One way is to ensure the expectant mother is not exposed to dangerous substances in the workplace, or environmental hazards. For more information on this program is Master Sgt. David Eshbaugh at ext. 5107.

## **Air Force Reenlistment Bonuses** **Adjusted**

Air Force officials recently revised reenlistment bonuses, adding or increasing 40 career field zones and decreasing or removing 100, according to Air Force Personnel Center officials here. The revision to the selective reenlistment bonus program includes additions of zones in two career fields that previously did not have a bonus. In addition, 10 career fields that previously had some type of bonus were deleted from the revised list. Additions and multiple increases are effective June 4. The SRB multiple decreases and deletions are effective July 4. The new list of bonuses is at <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/enlskills/Reenlistments/reenlistments.htm>



**Air National Guard**  
*Americans At Their Best.*

## Air Force Surveying Reservists

by 2nd Lt. Lance Patterson  
Air Force Reserve Command Public Affairs

ROBINS AIR FORCE BASE, Ga. (AFPN) — This year, for the first time, the Air Force Climate Survey will include all Air Force reservists.

Feedback from last year's study, formerly the Air Force Chief of Staff Survey, prompted the Air Force to involve a larger audience in the new survey, which will gauge factors affecting the day-to-day mission, leadership and availability of resources.

Results of the online survey will serve as the baseline for the total force.

Past surveys were limited to the active-duty Air Force and Department of Defense civilians. This year's survey, which runs Oct. 1 to Nov. 23, will be expanded to include members of the Air Force Reserve Command and Air National Guard, as well as nonappropriated fund civilians and students.

"Sustaining the world's pre-eminent air and space force requires continued excellence in the work environment," said Lt. Gen. James E. Sherrard III, commander of AFRC, in a letter to reservists. "This survey will provide valuable information to all reservists and Air Force leaders to achieve that goal. By taking a few brief moments to fill out this survey, you can help your leaders understand your concerns and ultimately better serve you and our nation's interests."

The Air Force Climate Survey 2003 will be easily accessible and user-friendly, according to officials. Comments will not be edited or filtered and will provide valuable feedback, including new ideas from people.

The survey will seek input on issues from every major level of the Air Force. It will serve as a tool to measure the climate of an organization, asking participants to evaluate factors having the greatest influence on their service — general satisfaction, unit performance outcomes, recognition, teamwork, supervision, training, career development, job enhancement, resources, participation and unit flexibility.

The survey will also provide anonymity with software masking techniques that do not attach the respondent's user identification and password to survey responses. Respondents will be asked not to write self-revealing details in the comments portion of the survey.

In a letter to survey participants, Chief Master Sgt. Cheryl Adams, AFRC command chief master sergeant, wrote: "By participating in the survey, you will provide critical information to leaders in your organization to make the Air Force a better place to work. Since the survey software protects your identity, I encourage you to be honest and straightforward in your responses. This survey data will be as good as you make it. This is your chance to stand up and be counted."

Survey organizers said the Air Force Climate Survey 2003 will not be a quality-of-life survey because it will not

solicit information or feedback about base facilities and functions, pay or benefits. The survey will also not ask about racial or sexual harassment or discrimination, or certain health practices of members or their families.

The results of the survey will be released in February to unit leaders. More information about the survey can be found at <https://afclimatesurvey.af.mil>.

(Courtesy of AFRC News Service)

## VA Expands Agent Orange Benefits

Based on a recent review of scientific studies, the VA is extending benefits to Vietnam veterans with chronic lymphocytic leukemia (CLL). The ruling means that veterans with CLL who served in Vietnam during the Vietnam War don't have to prove that illness is related to their military service to qualify for VA disability compensation. Also, the VA offers special access to medical care to Vietnam veterans with any health problems that may have resulted from Agent Orange exposure. The following conditions are considered service-connected for Vietnam veterans: type II diabetes, chloracne (a skin disorder), porphyria cutanea tarda, acute or subacute peripheral neuropathy (a nerve disorder), non-Hodgkin's lymphoma, soft tissue sarcoma, Hodgkin's disease, multiple myeloma, prostate cancer and respiratory cancers (including cancers of the lung, larynx, trachea and bronchus). In addition, Vietnam veterans' children with the birth defect spina bifida are eligible for certain benefits and services. Veterans with questions can call a toll-free help line at 1-800-749-8387 for information. More information about Agent Orange can be found at <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,30978,00.html>

## Savings Bonds to Be Converted to Electronic Accounts

Stars and Stripes reports that the federal Treasury Department plans to convert paper U.S. savings bonds to electronic accounts within the next three years. Most military personnel buying savings bonds — EE or I series — already do so electronically through the agency's "safekeeping" program. Under the safekeeping program, personnel in the Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps can buy electronic bonds and have them stored as such through their respective branch of the military. While paper notes no longer will be available to purchase once the transformation is complete, their electronic replacements will be available online from a federal Website. Although an electronic bond redemption system for troops has yet to be set up, the Treasury Department already has an electronic bond program available called Treasury Direct at <http://www.treasurydirect.gov>.

## ON THIS DAY IN HISTORY ...

**July 23, 1917** — Maj. Benjamin D. Foulois assigned as officer in charge of the U.S. Army's Airplane Division.

**July 21, 1943** — C.B. Hall became first black fighter pilot to down an enemy aircraft.

**July 26, 1947** — President Harry S. Truman signed the Armed Forces Unification Act creating the U.S. Air Force onboard the presidential VC-54 Sacred Cow.

**July 11, 1955** — First U.S. Air Force Academy class of 306 cadets sworn in.

**July 19, 1957** — First air-to-air nuclear rocket fired by the Air Force.

**July 10, 1965** — U.S. Air Force scored the first air-to-air combat victory in Southeast Asia.

**July 9, 1966** — The F-111 Aardvark variable-sweep-wing fighter-bomber flew for the first time at Mach 2.5 or about 1,800 mph.

**July 16, 1971** — Jeanne M. Holm, director of Women in the Air Force, became the first woman promoted to brigadier general.

**July 17, 1989** — The B-2 Spirit made its first flight.



## WWII Veterans May Be Eligible for One More Medal

Army News Service reports that World War II veterans who earned the Combat Infantry Badge or the Combat Medical Badge are eligible to receive another award to honor their heroism, the Bronze Star. In 1947, the Bronze Star Medal was authorized for all of those who earned a Combat Infantry Badge or the Combat Medical Badge, according to Army regulation 600-8-2, Military Awards. The medal was designed to honor the infantrymen who endured the greatest hardships and the medics who accompanied them on the front lines, officials said. When the son of a World War II veteran was restoring lost copies of his father's record, he found out from the National Personnel Records Center out of St. Louis that his father was one of many who had never received the Bronze Star Medal. Officials from the National Personnel Records Center say that they don't know how many veterans are eligible for the medal or who still have not received the award, because a massive fire in 1963 destroyed most of the official military personnel files from World War II.

For more on how to get service records and apply for medals, see <http://www.military.com/Resources/ResourcesContent/0,13964,31460,00.html>

## Amusement Park Ticket Prices

Tickets are available at the 167th Services office Bldg. 124, located next to the base pharmacy.

	Regular Price	Our Price
Kings Dominion Adult	\$42.99	\$20.00
Six Flags - Gen Admission	\$35.99	\$20.00
Season Pass	\$62.99	\$59.00
Hershey Park - Adult	\$35.95	\$27.00
Junior (ages 3-8)	\$19.95	\$19.00

Note: All ticket purchase on cash basis only. No checks please. Please call the office at 5178/5174 to ensure that someone is there to assist you.

## Air Force Ends Stop-Loss

The last of the airmen whose retirement or separation was delayed by Stop-Loss for Operation Iraqi Freedom were released June 23 and will be eligible to leave the service July 31. Air Force officials authorized Stop-Loss for 43 officer and 56 enlisted specialties in early March to meet national security objectives, specifically the war in Iraq. More than half of the specialties — 31 officer and 20 enlisted — were released from the program May 14. The Stop-Loss release applies to all active-duty, Reserve and Air National Guard people in all enlisted grades and officers in the grade of colonel and below; however, deployed airmen must remain in place for the duration of their deployment. For more details, see [http://www.military.com/NewsContent?file=usaf1\\_062303](http://www.military.com/NewsContent?file=usaf1_062303)

## SGLI/FSGLI Premium Change

The premium rates for Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance (SGLI) and Family SGLI (FSGLI) decreased on July 1. For information and a complete listing of all SGLI/FSGLI rates, visit the VA Insurance web site at: <http://www.insurance.va.gov>

## Quotable

"Our air-ground coordination was similar to the historic cooperation demonstrated by Generals Arnold and Patton in their famous breakout of Normandy, and Patton's race across France in 1944 — a goal General Jumper and I have shared for the last two years. During the entire campaign, The Iraqi Air Force didn't fly a single sortie against coalition forces. In fact, the Iraqi Air Force took to burying their airplanes — we presume in an attempt to save them. This has to be one of the more surprising tactics one of our enemies used to preserve their Air Force when faced with the prospect of fighting ours."

*Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche,*  
National Security Forum, Maxwell AFB, Ala.

## Unit Members Continue to Excel in Deployments

*By Maj. Shaun J. Perkowski*

It has come to my attention that word of the exploits of the West Virginia Air National Guard, activated and deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, is slow to reach our community back home. I thought I'd provide a little update for the folks in Martinsburg and surrounding areas.

Boy, have we been busy! The airplanes are flying every day without a hitch. The aircrews have seen just about every airfield in the region and are still visiting new landing strips. Our morale is good, but we sure are ready to be home with our families and friends. The weather is dry and hot (122 degrees at some locations), and the sand is everywhere.

The teamwork displayed by the aircrew and maintainers is unparalleled. Our C-130s fly every day without a hiccup. I don't know of one maintenance cancellation suffered – this in light of the nearly 1000 sorties, both combat and combat support, flown. The crews take care of each other and the airplanes while flying, and the maintainers see to it that we have the best planes in the theater.

Let me talk about our maintenance for just a little bit. These are the hardest working, most professional technicians I have seen in my 14-year Air Force career. When the six fliers arrive at the airplane, after the 10-minute ride to the flight line, we are greeted by our maintenance team. It's hard to get out of the crew van as the maintainers are standing in wait for our flying gear (quite a bit of it). Some help us load while others are finishing the final preparations to the airplane –cleaning the sand off the windows for the last time and taking the sunshades out. We're briefed on the airplane's maintenance status, check the paperwork and then sent to work. The C-130, the workhorse of airlift over here, is nothing but ready to

fly every time we get to the airplane.

We're flying throughout the theater: delivering "bombs and beans and bullets." Generals have been flown to Northern Iraq in West Virginia's C-130s, and casualties have been airlifted out of the same airfields. The planes have performed flawlessly. The crews have done the same.

After a full day, we land back at our deployed location. Pulling into parking, the crew can see the maintenance crew ready to swarm the aircraft and turn it for another mission. As much as I'd like to get out of my seat as soon as the propellers stop turning, I am blockaded by some of the same maintainers that launched the aircraft when the day began. They're probing us, asking, "Well how's she doing? Anything we need to know about?" The professionals truly work with the diligence and expertise of any NASCAR crew. It is heartening every time watching them get the airplane ready, as soon as it stands still, for another flight. I have never seen anything like it. I have never felt such pride working with such a dedicated team.

The paperwork finished, the aircrew heads to the tent and maybe some chow. The maintainers work in the 100 degree heat, in the sand and wind, and the C-130 is readied for its next mission.

So, Martinsburg, family, and friends, we are busy. We're working hard and doing the job. We have professionals over here that are serving you proudly. It is my pleasure to fly with the best crews on airplanes maintained by the world's best maintenance. It may sound like an exaggeration to some, but here it is just fact. We miss y'all and hopefully we'll be home soon.



### No One Home

The picture of the 167th Flight Line to the left was taken by Staff Sgt. Emily Beightol, 167th AW Multimedia Support Center. On July 15, 2003. This was only the third time that the flight line has been completely empty due to deployments.

## Unit Members Return from Southwest Asia



*A 167th Airlift Wing C-130 carrying approximately 40 members of the unit returning from a four-month deployment flies the West Virginia State flag as it pulls onto the ramp.*



*Major Randall Richter, Technical Sgt. Mark Walters and 1Lt. Eric Widmeyer are greeted upon their arrival from the Deployment.*



*Family members of the returning group anxiously await the their return.*



*Major Gerald Stuck hugs his wife after returning to the 167th AW on July 7.*

**Photos by Staff Sgt. Emily Beightol,  
167th AW Multimedia Support Center.**

